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Canada

# PROFILES OF PROGRESS

Contributions to Criminal Justice in Canada





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Contributions to Criminal Justice in Canada



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Solicitor General of Canada

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## FOREWORD

One of the primary roles of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada is to improve policies and programs in Canada's criminal justice system through research, demonstration programs, and the dissemination of information. Given the increasing costs of crime, and the criminal justice system, the need to develop innovative, cost-effective policies and programs takes on additional urgency.

The Programs Branch is the Ministry's principal instrument to develop and test programs that provide alternatives to the traditional approaches to crime prevention and treatment of offenders. Many of these approaches are community-based and seek to engage the citizens' support and participation. The results of these initiatives, some of which are outlined in the following pages, give ample evidence of the encouraging results that can be obtained from such innovative efforts.

The progress that has been made is only a beginning. Many more projects are being developed or are under way. We hope to be telling you about them soon.



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## INTRODUCTION

Much of the hard work and innovation in the field of criminal justice passes unnoticed by the public. The headlines tend to concentrate on the sensational. *Profiles of Progress: Contributions to Criminal Justice in Canada* attempts to ease the imbalance.

*Profiles* is not intended to be a detailed account of what is occurring in criminal justice in Canada; its aim is to provide the interested public with an overview of recent research and experimental projects in which the Programs Branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada has played a part.

The Ministry's concern is in reducing the social and economic costs of crime. The function of the Programs Branch is to generate the information and knowledge necessary to enable the Ministry to implement sound policies and programs that further that aim.

While the following profiles are only brief sketches of projects that are currently or have been supported by the Programs Branch, taken together they illustrate the range and complexity of the work being done to improve our criminal justice system.

However, it will quickly become apparent to the reader that the Programs Branch has not acted alone. The participation and co-operation among all levels of government, social agencies, academics, volunteer groups, and private citizens is encouragingly evident.

For those wanting more detailed information on any of the research or projects

mentioned we invite you to contact the Programs Branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada.

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**PROJECT REDISCOVERY,  
QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS,  
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

The population of the Queen Charlotte Islands suffer from high rates of crime, unemployment, and drug and alcohol abuse among its young people. In response to these problems, Project Rediscovery was launched in the Spring of 1978.

Project Rediscovery is an innovative extension to existing youth services on the Islands. Its objectives are to contribute to a sense of pride and cultural identity for Haida youth, to expand awareness of the environment, to complement formal education through the study of human and natural history, to develop recreational and leadership skills, and to provide specialized training in such areas as life skills, search and rescue, and first aid.

Three programs are offered each summer: two-week wilderness camping and back-packing excursions on the west coast of Graham Island; two-week 180 kilometer kayak expeditions through the protected waterways of South Moresby Wilderness; and a Pacific coast cross-cultural exchange program. Over the winter the participants get together to share their experiences with each other and the Haida elders.

Correctional and social service agencies refer youths to the project. In the selection of participants, priority is given to teenagers, Native and non-Native, who have established patterns of anti-social or illegal behaviour.

To date the project has directly benefited over 200 young people. The fact that the project was designed by local people, with the direct participation of the Haida elders, has a lot to do with the project's success.

Project Rediscovery has attracted national and international attention and several Canadian Native communities are modelling programs after this example in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Project Rediscovery was organized as a pilot project funded jointly by the Ministry of the Attorney General of British Columbia and the Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General, with additional assistance from local organizations.





**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD, NANAIMO, BRITISH COLUMBIA**

The Neighbourhood Accountability Board, formed in July, 1980, is a leading force in the development of community alternatives to the processing of juveniles through the courts and it receives strong support from the community, police, and the probation service.

Volunteers, who are trained by the John Howard Society and the RCMP in Nanaimo, give direction to young offenders, and assist them in making restitution through an out-of-court process.

Youths under the age of 17, who accept responsibility for committing an offence, are eligible for referral to the project by the Crown Counsel, the probation service, or any of the community agencies who come into contact with young people. Once a referral has been made, the young person's parents and the victim are contacted and a hearing is held. The purpose of this hearing is to arrive at an appropriate and constructive solution that is agreeable to both victim and offender and that minimizes the probability of the young person committing further offences.

Nanaimo has become a model community in assuming responsibility for its social problems and in designing and implementing a plan to address juvenile crime.

The Nanaimo Neighbourhood Accountability Board is funded by the Programs Branch and the Ministry of the Attorney General of British Columbia. It is administered by the local John Howard Society.

## LETHBRIDGE ALTERNATIVE DISPOSITION PROJECT, ALBERTA

This project, run by the John Howard Society of Alberta since 1980, was designed as a model to demonstrate community-based sentencing alternatives encouraged in the *Young Offenders Act*.

The project allows the youth court judge to make full use of three alternatives to the traditional sentences given to young offenders. The judge may decide to have the young offender make restitution by providing a service to the victim, provide restitution in cash, whereby a stipulated sum is paid by the offender to the victim as compensation, or perform community work service, where the offender is ordered to perform a specified number of hours of community work.

The project staff mediates between a victim and an offender and also supervises the fulfillment of agreed-upon settlements. To assist the young offender in meeting

any work or service obligations, the staff has also developed a list of tasks which can be performed in the community.

The amount of restitution paid under this program has been substantial and the number of referrals is steadily increasing. A recently completed evaluation provided a comprehensive description and analysis of the project, and its impact on the criminal justice system, the Lethbridge community, and offenders and their victims. The evaluation method, which was used because of its thoroughness, has also served as a model for assessing alternative programs elsewhere.

Initially the Lethbridge Alternative Disposition Project was funded federally by the Programs Branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General; currently the Ministry shares costs with the department of Social Services of Alberta.



THE SAINT JOHN YOUTH PROJECT,  
NEW BRUNSWICK



This project has had success in developing an effective network of agencies dealing with young people, receiving the support of the community, related agencies, and the police. A major innovation of this police-sponsored program is that it is headed by a civilian co-ordinator and not a police officer. A Youth Division of the police department was formed at the inception of the project.

A Youth Officer works in each of the four geographically defined areas of the

city, usually operating out of the local community centre. This decentralization of Youth Officers ensures that they become specialists on the community in which they serve. Unlike Juvenile Officers in other police departments across the country, Youth Officers of the Saint John Youth Project do no investigative work.

A school liaison program of the Youth Division furthers the aim of preventive policing. The program's goals are to improve communication and understanding



between the police and young people. Youth Officers make presentations to school classes and informally participate in extra-curricular activities, generally making themselves available as a resource for both schools and students.

A community-based diversion program is a part of the project. First-time offenders who have committed non-violent property crimes are provided with an alternative to being processed through the court system. A citizens' committee, in co-operation with the offender, his or her parents, and the victim work toward a voluntary resolution of the problem. Most solutions result in the offender paying restitution, or carrying out a work-order for the victim or the community.

A community support program enables citizens to assist in improving the quality of life in their community. The program provides guidance, counselling, constructive activities and direction for young people and, where appropriate, assists their families. A key feature of the program is the matching of a young person with an adult volunteer. Apart from establishing a relationship with the young person, the adult also serves as an advocate, ensuring that the youth receives services and assistance needed.

Another important feature of the Saint John Youth Project was the Advisory Committees, which were formed to facilitate communication between the criminal justice system and various youth-service agencies. These Committees evolved into the Youth Services Council, which encourages citizen participation, promotes public

awareness of youth problems, identifies difficulties and gaps in services, and collects and exchanges information on programs.

Initially the Saint John Youth Project was sponsored by the Police Department of Saint John, New Brunswick and it was jointly funded by the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General and the City of Saint John. It is now solely funded by the City.

## ATLANTIC YOUTH ALTERNATIVES RESOURCE GROUP

Representatives from youth projects in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and a representative from the Department of Justice in Prince Edward Island have come together as the Atlantic Youth Alternatives Resource Group. The members share information about programming for young offenders and serve as a consultation and information resource for the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General.

Another major objective of the Resource Group is to promote public awareness of alternative programs for youth in conflict with the law in Atlantic Canada. The Group runs workshops and seminars for

those in the criminal justice system and the general public; participates in other workshops on a local, provincial, regional, and national level; and has produced a booklet, *Justice for Youth in Atlantic Canada* and a slide/tape presentation, *Alternatives for Youth in Atlantic Canada*. These materials have been used both regionally and nationally in Canada to encourage the use of alternative programs for young people.

The Atlantic Youth Alternatives Resource Group is funded by the Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General.



## PROJECT ENTENTE, POINTE CLAIRE, QUEBEC

Project Entente, which began in 1980, is a court diversion project emphasizing community involvement through the use of volunteers, local groups, and businesses. It is administered by an eight-member steering committee composed of citizens.

The program is for those under the age of 18 who have been charged with an offence but have not yet been before the court. Referrals are made to the director of the project by social workers, teachers, and police. When an offender meets the criteria set by the steering committee, an interview is arranged with the referral source, the young person, his or her parents, a volunteer, and the director of Project Entente. One of the conditions for entry into the Entente program is that the young person must accept responsibility for the offence.

Both Project Entente and the traditional court process are explained to the youth and the parents; a choice is made between the project or court proceedings. If the young person is accepted for the program, a community service agreement is signed. It is in force for no longer than three months and cannot be more severe than a court sentence for the same offence.

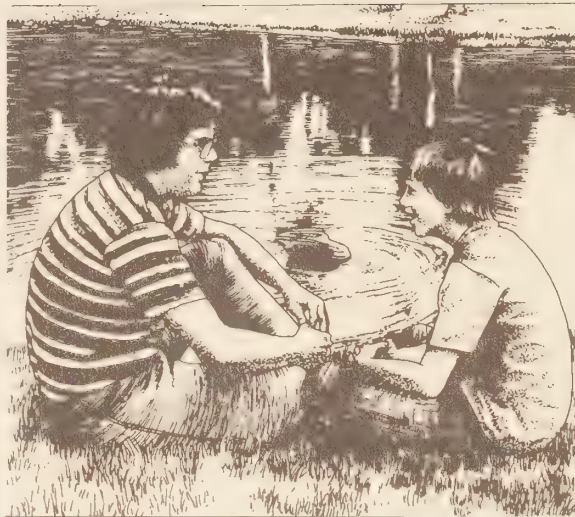
Participants are matched with volunteers who supervise the community service agreements. Upon completion of an assignment the referral source is notified and the youth's official involvement in Project Entente ends.

Project Entente is a community service and restitution program operated by the

Montreal West Island Y.M.C.A. It is funded by this organization with assistance from the Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Montreal Urban Community Police.



## WATERLOO-WELLINGTON ATTENDANCE CENTRE, ONTARIO



The Attendance Centre in Kitchener, Ontario, is an experimental project for youths and children who are having serious problems at home and at school, and who are in danger of coming into conflict with the law.

Children referred to the program have had at least one official contact with police. Attendance Centre staff are contacted by the authorities when a child agrees to participate and intake procedures begin within 24 hours.

At the Centre, run by the John Howard Society with funding assistance from the Programs Branch, children receive intensive individual counselling and supervision from professional and volunteer staff each week-day evening for an eight- to ten-week period. As a follow-up to this program, children continue to receive the appropriate attention and after-care for a period not to exceed ten weeks.

The Centre has been so successful that in its two-and-a-half years of operation only one child in 84 has been charged while participating in the program.

The Waterloo-Wellington Attendance Centre receives the support of local agencies, community services, the police, and the judiciary. A welcome bonus has come from area service clubs which have provided funding to send a number of children who have successfully completed the program, to summer camp.

## BEAUVAL COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL ALTERNATIVES PROJECT, SASKATCHEWAN

The Beauval alternatives project has become a model for small, remote communities wishing to develop criminal justice alternatives for offenders. What makes this project particularly unique is the wide range of pre-trial and post-trial alternatives it encompasses within one program.

The Beauval Community Correctional Alternatives Project provides the services of a community correctional liaison worker, who comes under the direction of the Beauval Community Corrections Advisory Board. The liaison worker is responsible for implementing community programs to have offenders perform community service as an alternative to incarceration or probation.

Offenders participate in mediation sessions with their victims. Individuals are referred to mediation by officers of the RCMP, the local Justice of the Peace, or citizens. The sessions are run either directly by the liaison worker or through volunteers.

Periodically, assistance is provided to the liaison worker by the regional probation officer or the Corrections Co-ordinator for northern Saskatchewan. This co-ordinator also monitors and evaluates the project. The liaison worker, in assisting offenders and potential offenders, draws on the resources of the community.

The Program has had several demonstrable benefits — valuable work is performed for the community, the probation officer makes fewer visits, and money is

saved by avoiding the expense of traditional remedies such as incarceration and probation.

Considerable interest has been shown in applying the Beauval model to other small communities: a similar program is operating in Wallaceburg, Ontario; another is planned for Dryden, Ontario; and, it is expected that the program will be expanded to include other communities in northern Saskatchewan.

Beauval Community Correctional Alternatives Project was jointly funded by the Province of Saskatchewan and the Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General.

# **RESTIGOUCHE FAMILY CRISIS INTERVENERS PROJECT, NEW BRUNSWICK**

The County of Restigouche in New Brunswick has a population of over 40,000 in an area of 33,000 square miles. It is a remote, rural area that lacks many of the services available in more urban areas.

In the late 1970s the police and other professionals in the area, concerned about the high rate of family violence in the county, formed a Citizens' Advisory Committee. The Committee, comprising 25 interested people from the community, set out to develop a co-ordinated approach to the problem.

The Committee members conducted a careful appraisal of local resources and reviewed family crisis resolution programs operating in other Canadian and American communities. The outcome was the Restigouche Family Crisis Interveners Project managed by the Citizens' Advisory Committee. The Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General provided funding and the expertise of its Atlantic Regional Consultant.

The goals of the project are:

- (1) to provide, in a rural setting, five refuges for emotionally and physically abused women and children;
- (2) to offer support to the victims as quickly as possible;
- (3) to improve the co-ordination of the existing community services and families and individuals in crisis;

- (4) to reduce the number of chronic callers to the police;
- (5) to reduce the hours that police officers must spend on quasi-criminal matters; and,
- (6) to emphasize crime prevention and to seek means of reducing incidents of family violence.

The Family Crisis Interveners Project is run by a small staff directing a team of well-trained local volunteers. At any hour of every day the volunteers are available to the five police detachments in Restigouche County.

The Restigouche Family Crisis Interveners Project is a post-police intervention model demonstrated to be of value in cases of family violence in a rural area where the social services are centralized and not available on a twenty-four hour basis.





## COMMUNITY MEDIATION SERVICE, KITCHENER, ONTARIO



The Community Mediation Service (CMS) is an out of court program using third-party mediators to settle disputes between individuals or groups.

It was not designed as a universal alternative to criminal or civil legal proceedings. Rather, CMS was established as a means of providing a settlement to disputes that are often dealt with by the criminal justice system. It is possible that the court process, through declaring a winner and a loser, can exacerbate hostilities between the parties, particularly in continuing relationships between neighbours, landlords and tenants, friends, or family members.

The Community Mediation Service was brought into operation in January 1980 after several years of planning by members of the Mennonite Central Committee (Ontario) and the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Waterloo. The Programs Branch, the A. R. Kaufman Charitable Foundation, the Mennonite Central Committee (Ontario) and various local churches fund the service.

Referrals come from a wide variety of sources: the police, the Crown Attorney's Office, the Provincial Court, social service agencies, and individuals.

Those involved in CMS have actively promoted community mediation across Canada and have given considerable assistance to the development of other projects. The staff have produced a comprehensive volunteer mediator training package, for use by similar projects across the country. A mediation resource centre also is being established.

The Community Mediation Service recently amalgamated with the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program to become Community Justice Initiatives, a post-trial program sharing the same philosophy of community responsibility for problem solving. A victim services program has also been added and has received funding from the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada.

Once a referral is made, CMS staff contact each disputant and listen to both sides of the issue. The mediation process is explained and the rights and privileges of each party are outlined. If the disputants agree to meet, a mediation session is set up as soon as possible. Most cases involve two mediators and one to three hours is spent in attempting to resolve the dispute.

If the mediation succeeds, an agreement is drawn up and signed by each party and the referral source is advised. If charges have been laid and the case has proceeded to the court stage, a report is submitted to the Crown Attorney, who may decide to withdraw the charge.

## NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON SERVICES TO CRIME VICTIMS

Growing awareness of the lack of attention paid to victims of crime prompted the Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General to organize and sponsor the first national workshop on services to crime victims. The workshop was held in Ottawa in the Spring of 1980.

The main objectives of the workshop were: to examine services and programs in the United States, and to assess their adaptability to the Canadian system; to identify where the gaps existed in victim services in Canada; and to consider possible strategies to augment existing services and to expand and improve the system of justice for victims.

Attending the workshop were representatives from police forces, volunteer groups and federal and provincial government departments — all concerned with the need for better services for victims and witnesses.

The workshop highlighted the gaps within our system and the necessity of improving services to crime victims and witnesses in Canada. The workshop was an important first step in developing victim initiatives such as an international conference held in Toronto in the Fall of 1981; a federal Cabinet decision resulting in additional funding for research and demonstration projects; and a Federal-Provincial Task Force on Victims reported on its findings. A summary of the Task Force report is available from the Programs Branch.



## CANADIAN URBAN VICTIMIZATION SURVEY (1982)

Early in 1982, Statistics Canada conducted a major telephone survey for the Ministry of the Solicitor General in seven urban centres: Greater Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax/Dartmouth, and St. John's. More than 61,000 residents aged 16 and older were asked about their perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system, their experience of selected types of criminal victimization during the previous year (1981), and the financial, physical and emotional impact that such victimization may have had upon them.

This survey provides the most extensive information available to date on the extent and distribution of reported *and* unreported crimes in urban Canada, and the social and environmental factors which are most strongly associated with risk of victimization. The findings will be of considerable importance to those who design and implement crime prevention programs, those who wish to design or devise safer physical and social environments, and those who wish to mitigate the effects of fear of crime and victimization itself.

Preliminary analyses have already indicated that the general direction of the victimization findings is similar to that found elsewhere — that personal violent crimes are relatively rare, and that young, active, single males are the most likely to be robbed or assaulted.

Concern about and fear of crime is, however, felt more keenly by other groups. Specifically, women and elderly people are most likely to state that they

feel unsafe walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark, and not surprisingly, among victims, female victims of sexual assault are most likely to say they feel unsafe walking alone after dark, and that counselling should be made available to victims of similar crimes.

Although elderly people are rarely victims of violent or property offences, the financial and physical impact of such victimization is far greater than for younger victims, in large part because of their low incomes and physical vulnerability.

The Programs Branch is publishing a series of Bulletins analyzing the findings of the survey.

## POLICE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

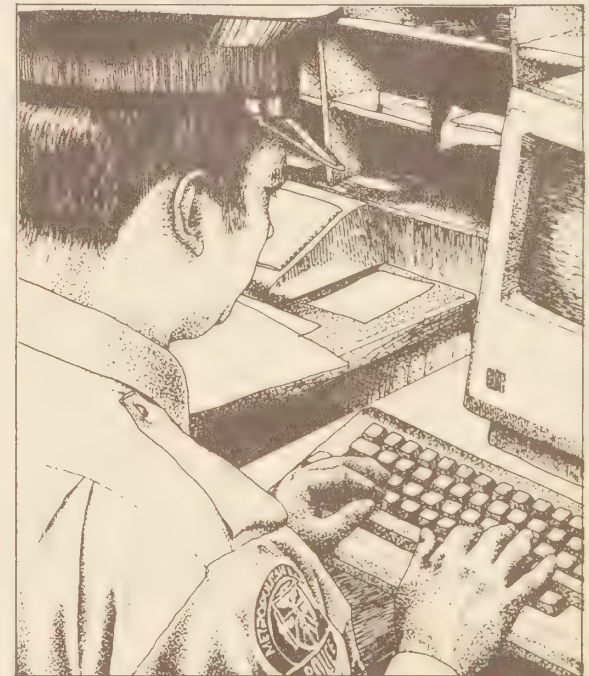
One of the challenges of modern computer technology is to find the system which best fits the job and then to use it to capacity. The Programs Branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada contracted Decision Dynamics Corporation to develop procedures to assist Canadian police forces in establishing efficient systems for collecting, retrieving, and using information.

The study team attempted to come to grips with subject matter that had never been addressed in a comprehensive way by Canadian research. The members of the team visited over 30 police jurisdictions in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom and they carried out intensive field observations in those departments with the most advanced information systems.

The researchers concluded that there is no single 'packaged' police MIS suitable for all departments. Because all police forces are different, the type of MIS they require to deliver information to users in specific job functions will differ by police force. Furthermore, because information technology is changing so rapidly, as are the demands being placed on police themselves, there is a constant need to upgrade police information procedures.

The survey revealed a growth of interest in MIS by senior office managers and visits to selected Canadian departments suggested that there are exciting, innovative and potentially valuable programs taking place in the field. Unfortunately, information transfer was found to be

sporadic — with little attempt to publish documentary evidence about MIS developmental programs. Publication of the results of this study represent the first such attempt in Canada. A five-volume report, plus an overview of the major findings and conclusions of the study, were published by the Ministry. The first three volumes outline the general issues involved in the application of new technology to policing and Canadian and American police experience with MIS. The final two volumes contain a "catalogue" of procedures for developing MIS in a police environment and the technical design specifications of one management information system framework, Targeted Information Processing System (TIPS).



## DAKOTA OJIBWAY TRIBAL COUNCIL POLICE COMMISSION, MANITOBA

There are more Natives in Canadian correctional institutions than would be expected on the basis of their proportion of our population. This fact prompted the Programs Branch to support the creation of a unique Native policing experiment, the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Commission.

This Commission consists of the Chiefs of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Reserves and representatives from the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Manitoba Department of the Attorney General and the RCMP. The Chiefs form the majority on the Commission.

The Commission created the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Force. Funding is jointly provided by the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Manitoba Department of the Attorney General.

The guiding tenets of this Force are the prevention of crime and the recognition of particular policing needs and concerns of Native people living on reserves. This translates into the explicit goals of reducing the amount of crime on reserves, and improving police services to residents of reserves. Implicit in these objectives is the belief that a police force developed and led by Native people is better able to meet their needs.

Those involved in the project have learned the importance of carefully planning the overall operation, clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the Com-

mission, the Chief of Police and the police force, and preparing the residents on the reserves for the new service. The Commission and the police force are using the knowledge and experience accumulated to build a more effective service for their band members.

The Dakota Ojibway police project has attracted considerable attention from Native communities across Canada.



## WOMEN IN POLICING



Only in recent years have women been allowed to join Canadian police forces and there continues to be a debate about their participation and role in policing.

The Programs Branch of Solicitor General Canada engaged Rick Linden of the University of Manitoba to do an in-depth study of the whole question of women in policing. His research began with a literature review undertaken by himself and Candice Minch. This was followed by empirical study of the Vancouver Police Department and the RCMP of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. In the latter, he examined and compared performance appraisals, attrition rates, and the deployment of male and female officers; and perceptions of female officers by themselves,

male colleagues, supervisors, and citizens.

In his study of the two forces, Linden found that assignments given women were the same as those given men. No differences were found in their arrest rates. Decisions to provide back up on dispatch calls appeared to be based on the type of call, rather than on the sex of the responding officer.

Close to one third of the male officers objected to women being a part of the patrol force. Initial expectations about the performance of women were not high on the part of many of the supervisors surveyed, however, the majority of them gave their female officers "good" or "very good" ratings when they actually

evaluated their performance. Citizens believed that female officers performed their duties as competently as male officers and they rated the female officers' performance more positively than did male officers.

While all other findings from the study of the two police forces were similar, a difference in the attrition rates of male and female officers was found for the RCMP sample but not for the Vancouver Police Department. The female RCMP officers' rate was double that for male officers. No single reason was isolated to account for this, however, the attitudes of male officers and transfer problems appeared to have had a bearing.

The results of this research, which paralleled findings in the United States, illustrate that the major obstacle to the full integration of women in policing is not their capabilities or performance but rather the negative attitudes of their male colleagues. Changing attitudes is not an easy task. Isolating the problem is a first step.

## THE JUVENILE OFFICERS TRAINING COURSE

The participation of police and non-police youth workers and an emphasis on social issues are the two factors that set the Juvenile Officers Training Course apart from traditional police training courses.

The three-week course, developed by the Winnipeg Police Training Division in co-operation with the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, covers a wide range of topics: theories of delinquent behaviour and crime causation; child development; the role of the family; multiculturalism and discrimination; child abuse; sexual crimes; drug and alcohol abuse.

With an emphasis on crime prevention and co-operation among the various agencies working with young people, the course is producing more effective police officers and social service workers.

The program has resulted in the development of a course-training standard that is currently being used in various parts of Canada. The Programs Branch of the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General has agreed to fund the initial implementation of the course in each of the five regions in Canada.



## SUPERVISION PRACTICES OF PROBATION SUPERVISORS AND RECIDIVISM AMONG PROBATIONERS

What characteristics and supervision practices make probation officers successful in lowering the recidivism rates of probationers? Answering this question has been the goal of a major research program headed by Don Andrews of Carleton University.

Andrews assessed volunteer and professional probation officers to determine the extent to which they adopted warm, open, and flexible styles of interaction with their probationary clients and the degree to which they adhered to established rules and procedures. From audio-taped supervision sessions the researchers scored the various practices of supervisors. Additional data came from attitude and personality inventories completed by probationers. Andrews also compiled recidivism data on these probationers.

He found that the combination of high levels of both empathy and socialization displayed by officers was associated with the lowest rates of recidivism. The use of authority, anti-criminal modelling, or referrals to community service agencies were supervision practices that were correlated with reduced rates of recidivism whereas non-directive counselling was associated with increased rates of recidivism.

The study indicated that those probationers who complied the least with accepted social norms tended to respond most favourably to high levels of authority, to problem-solving techniques, and to greater access to community resources. Of all the probationers these ones responded the most unfavourably to high levels of non-directive counselling.

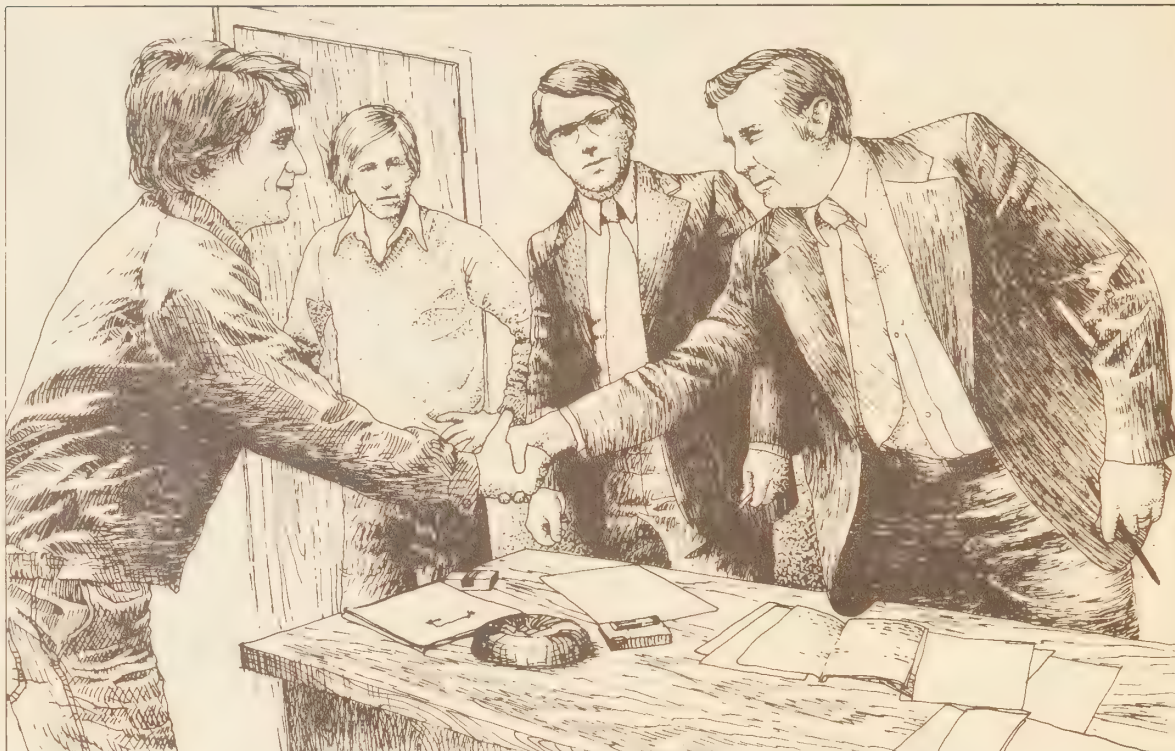


Those probationers most likely to recidivate were males, under 20, scholastically maladjusted — with less than grade 11 education, and unmarried. They had pro-criminal sentiments and delinquent ties, scored high on measures of aggressiveness and low on socialization.

Overall, supervision by volunteers was as effective as supervision by professional probation officers, thereby illustrating the value of volunteers to the probation service.

Identifying characteristics of probationers and probation officers and supervision practices that are most likely to result in low recidivism among probationers is an important first step in the development of improved selection and training of probation officers.

## PAROLE DECISION-MAKING IN CANADA: Research Towards Decision Guidelines



Concern over clarity and visibility of parole policy, as well as over equity in the application of the policy, led the National Parole Board of Canada (NPB) to consider researching its own decisions. The Programs Branch undertook to examine NPB decisions made over a three-year period in order to ascertain, and to make explicit, which factors were related to parole decisions, and with what consistency these were applied.

It was found that the seriousness of the offences was not related in a consistent fashion to the rate at which parole was granted. Rather, the study revealed that various offender characteristics were sig-

nificant to the parole decision — characteristics, which, in turn, related to the probability that the offender would be re-arrested after release.

Because of the empirical evidence pointing to the importance of risk of recidivism in the consideration of an inmate for parole, three statistical techniques (regression analysis, predictive attribute analysis, and simple summation) were tested, to determine their ability to predict whether an offender would be re-arrested for any serious (indictable) offence within three years of release. The summation technique was judged to be the most useful because it is mathematically straightforward, easy



to administer, and lends itself to intuitive understanding.

Owing to the importance attached to identifying those offenders likely to commit violent acts, it was decided to examine how well these three statistical instruments could predict violent recidivism. None of the instruments, taken as a whole, displayed any particular predictive power in pinpointing reliably those offenders who were likely to be violent if released.

The simple summation method, which was pioneered by the American criminologist E.W. Burgess and refined by the British Home Office Research Unit, proved, however, to be the most effective technique for distinguishing between 'high' and 'low' risk inmates. The method was unable to isolate a group of offenders with a better than one-in-three chance of being violent after release; it was, however, able to identify large numbers of persons who were extremely unlikely to be re-arrested for violent offence after release.

On the basis of the research, a set of guidelines was proposed for the systematic incorporation of the simple summation predictive technique into the decision-making processes of the NPB. It is recommended that offenders identified as 'good statistical risks' be granted an operating presumption in favour of full parole release at their initial date of eligibility. 'Poor risk' inmates would receive a presumption against parole, but would be selected for special attention and testing through a carefully planned program of graduated conditional releases. Procedures would be

established whereby the Board could step outside these guidelines, but exceptions to these operating principles would be monitored and analysed for their policy implications. The new system would address the problem of ensuring greater visibility and equity in the administration of parole policy in Canada.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES COURSE

The Programs Branch initiated the Criminal Justice Issues Course to encourage senior criminal justice policy-makers and practitioners to make greater use of current research findings.

Courses are a means of bringing together members of the judiciary, researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners to inform them of the latest research in their fields. Courses also provide forums to discuss mutual concerns and share different perspectives on a given topic.

In collaboration with Canadian universities, courses on selected topics of national concern and interest are organized. At a one-week residential course, leading academics present papers on the selected subject. The presentations are followed by small group discussions on the policy and practical implications of the research findings.

The 1980-81 program offered two companion courses on juvenile justice which were held at the University of Montreal, Quebec and Simon Fraser University, British Columbia. The courses provided the participants with the most recent research available on key issues in juvenile justice. A major emphasis at the Simon Fraser course was on the new *Young Offenders Act*.





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